

ENCOUNTER

4

PLAYERS:

The following information is for the Dungeon Master's eyes only!

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY

Players can use the pregenerated character sheets that came with issue 1 of *D&D Adventurer* or create their own character at dndbeyond.com/characters/builder.

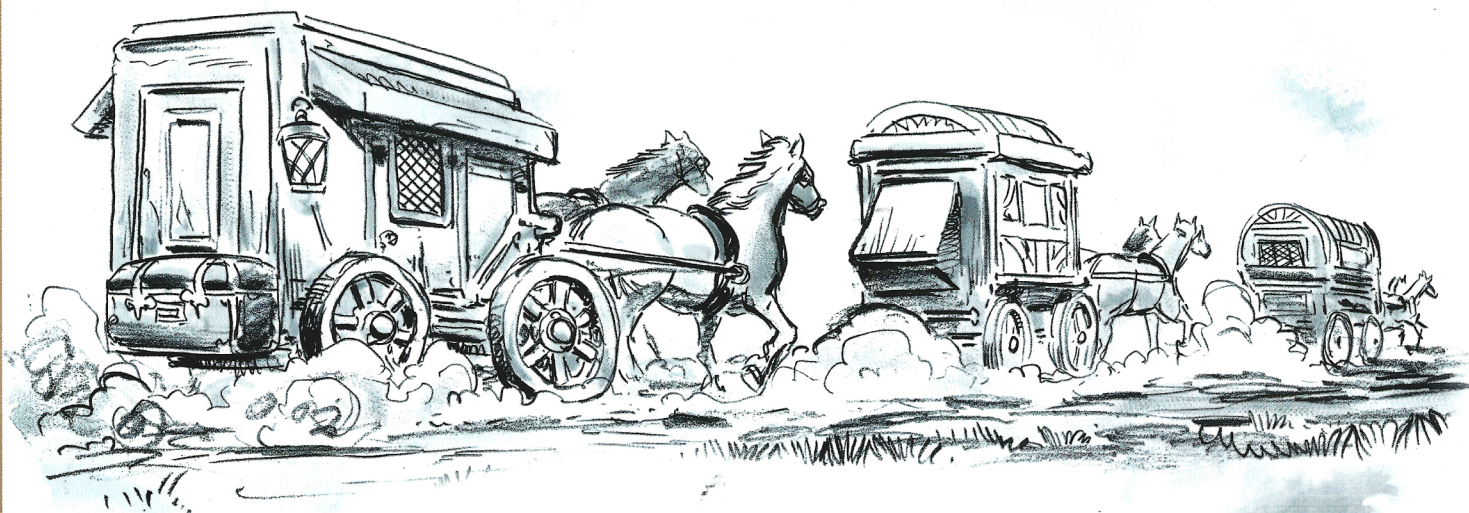
PLAY TIME 1-2 HOURS

ENCOUNTER OVERVIEW

Etterine Tzavari, vampire spawn of the infamous Artor Morlin (also known as the Baron of Blood), has been summoned to meet her undead master in the tunnels beneath Waterdeep. To attend the audience in time, her human servants must hurriedly transport her deathless body across the Sword Coast.

As the wagon bearing Etterine's body nears the town of

Phandalin, an untimely mudslide kills all but one of her servants. The injured lone survivor, Malet Grint, pays a local trading company to escort him and his top-secret cargo to Waterdeep. The traders hire local adventurers to accompany Malet to a rendezvous on the High Road, where he'll join a larger caravan heading south.



News of the mysterious trader reaches the ears of the Zhentarim, an unscrupulous affiliation of merchants, mercenaries and criminals, before the adventurers leave town. Eager to claim Malet's cargo for themselves, a gang of Zhentarim robbers gallop ahead on horseback to ambush the wagon before it reaches the safety of the High Road. Nobody is prepared for the horrors that shall be unleashed if Etterine's coffin is opened after nightfall!

ENCOUNTER GOALS

To complete this encounter, the party must escort the trader's wagon to the High Road and ensure it safely joins the caravan. If Etterine is awakened, the adventurers must save as many of their fellow travellers as possible.

BEGINNING THE ENCOUNTER

Heavy rains have flooded the roads around Phandalin. This morning, a mudslide washed over one of these roads and crushed a wagon. Local miners recovered its cargo, along with a lone, injured survivor. The adventurers are summoned to the Lionshield Coster, the town's trading post, where Linene Graywind asks them to escort the survivor and his cargo to the High Road.

Linene explains that the survivor has paid her a large sum of money to deliver him and his cargo to Waterdeep. If the characters enquire about the cargo, Linene reveals that her client is insistent that it remains confidential and undisturbed. She's arranged for the cargo to be loaded onto a small wagon train bound for Waterdeep.

Linene promises the party 200 gp (gold pieces) if they safely escort the wagons to the High Road, where they'll join with a larger caravan headed south. The journey should take roughly 24 hours, with a single night camped in the wilderness. If they leave now, they'll arrive by nightfall on the following day. Linene warns that the Triboar Trail is plagued by wolves and bandits, so the adventurers must remain vigilant.

LINENE GRAYWIND

The master of the Phandalin trading post is a sharp-tongued human woman of thirty-five years. Linene keeps a supply of armour and weapons in a back room, all of which are for sale to interested buyers. Linene has a few scruples, however, and won't sell weapons to anyone she thinks might be a threat to the town.

THE JOURNEY TO THE HIGH ROAD

The wagon train comprises three wagons, owned by the following NPCs:

Sariel Ilphelkiir (Female Moon Elf Merchant)

Sariel and her sister Lia are hauling snowflower wine from the Sword Mountains to cities in the south. Their cargo is stored in stoppered earthenware jugs.

Oriana Halfast (Female Human Chaperone)

Oriana is escorting an eight-year-old noble child, Ferghul Belabranta, on his return journey to Waterdeep after visiting his uncle in Yartar. Oriana is charged with ensuring Ferghul's proper upbringing and frowns at any crude behaviour that occurs in his presence.

Malet Grint (Male Human Vampire Servant)

Malet's leg was crushed during the mudslide and is set in a splint. He spends the journey snarling to himself and chewing on pain-numbing roots. His cargo comprises five crates containing Etterine Tzavari's extensive collection of clothing, her writing materials and her coffin.

All the NPCs have the statistics of **commoners**. See page 23 for stats.

ENTERTAINING MASTER BELABRANTA

As the characters journey along the trail, the young noble Ferghul Belabranta bombards them with childish questions. Roleplay the following events, noting in each case whether the adventurers pleased the boy:

- ◆ Ferghul asks a character to tell him a story of adventure.
- ◆ Ferghul asks a character to catch a fish for his supper from a nearby river.
- ◆ Ferghul asks a character to perform a feat of strength or agility.

To determine if the boy is pleased by the tale, call for a DC 10 ability check in an appropriate skill. Alternatively, if a player roleplays the scene particularly well, you can rule that Ferghul is impressed without rolling dice. If the characters please Ferghul at least twice, he announces that they are his new best friends. In this case, his family pays the characters an additional award if he survives to the end of the adventure.

THE ZHENTARIM AMBUSH

At sundown on the first day of travel, the adventurers ride into a trap. Read the following boxed text aloud:

Rounding a corner, you encounter a fallen tree blocking the road ahead. Four men are gathered around it (two on horseback, two on foot) apparently trying to move the tree from the road. Seeing you, one of the men hails you from afar and asks for your help.



The four men are **bandits** (see stat block, page 23) loyal to the Zhentarim. Another four are hiding in the bushes nearby, two on each side of the road. The bandits hope to lure the adventurers away from the wagons before springing their ambush.

On a signal, the bandits leap from the bushes with crossbows trained on the adventurers. Their leader, the cruel Orson Vrak, demands that the merchants hand over their cargo to the “safekeeping of the Zhentarim”. When Malet Grint refuses to do so, the bandits attack. During combat, they target anyone who stands between them and Malet’s cargo. The other traders cower in their wagons during the battle.

DYING LIGHT

When combat ensues, roll a d6 and add three to the result. This is how many rounds remain before the sun dips below the horizon. If the sun sets before combat has ended, one of the crates on Malet’s wagon starts to jolt and thump ominously. The vampire spawn **Etterine Tzavari** (see stat block, page 24) smashes free 1d6+2 rounds later and attacks everyone present. Etterine attacks any NPCs present before targeting the adventurers, so the players can see the extent of her power.

Prying open the crate before nightfall exposes Etterine to the sun’s rays, destroying her in seconds! If the adventurers surrender to the ambushers, the bandits are likely to break open the crate before sundown. In this case, the bandits are terrified by Etterine’s fiery demise. They make a hasty retreat, leaving the adventurers to their own business.

JOURNEYING ON

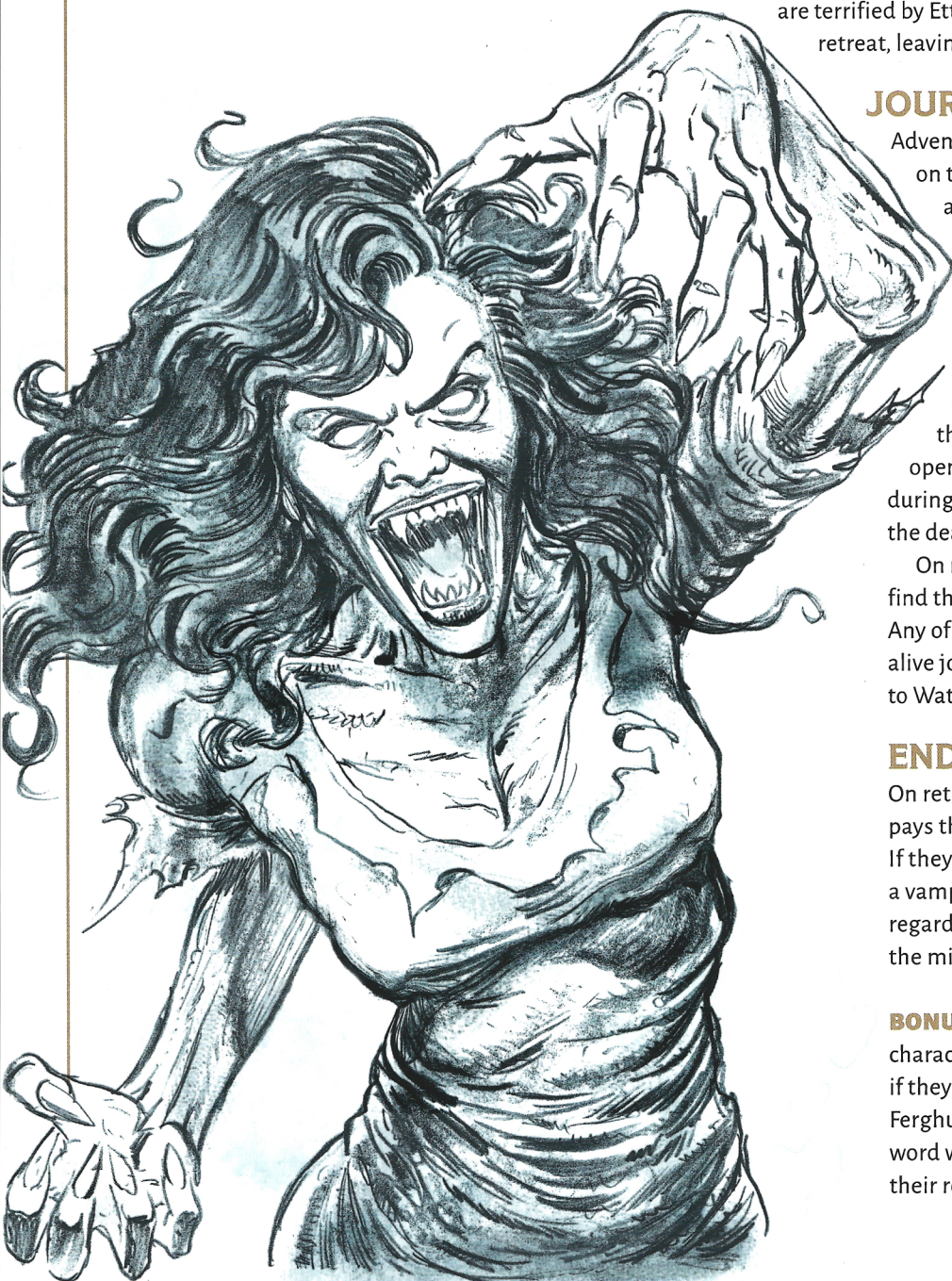
Adventurers who defeat the bandits can carry on their journey. That night, if Etterine is still active, anyone camped near Malet’s wagon hears ominous scratching emanating from the crate containing her body. Malet refuses to answer any questions about this if he’s alive, warning anyone who bothers him about it to mind their own business! Characters who suspect that evil is afoot may feel obliged to force open the crate themselves, either at night or during daylight hours. Of course, Malet fights to the death to prevent this from happening.

On reaching the High Road, the adventurers find the larger caravan camped at the crossroads. Any of the wagon train merchants who are still alive join the caravan on its onward journey to Waterdeep.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

On return to Phandalin, Linene Graywind pays the adventurers their 200 gp reward. If they explain that Malet Grint was transporting a vampire, Linene pays them their reward regardless of the success or failure of the mission.

BONUS REWARD. Some days later, the characters receive a bonus reward of 100 gp each if they successfully befriended and protected Ferghul Belabranta. The boy has put in a good word with his father, who is pleased to learn of their role in protecting his son and heir.



STAT BLOCKS



COMMONER

Medium Humanoid, Any Alignment

Armour Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Any one language (usually Common)

Proficiency Bonus +2

ACTIONS

Club. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

BANDIT

Medium Humanoid, Any Non-Lawful Alignment

Armour Class 12 (leather armour)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 1)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Proficiency Bonus +2

ACTIONS

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.



ETTERINE TZAVARI

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

Armour Class 14 (natural armour)

Hit Points 33 (6d6 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +2

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +5

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elvish

Proficiency Bonus +2

Regeneration. Etterine regains 2 (1d4) hit points at the start of her turn if she has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If she takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of her next turn.

Spider Climb. Etterine can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Vampire Weaknesses. Etterine has the following flaws:

- ◆ **Forbiddance.** Etterine can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.
- ◆ **Harmed by Running Water.** Etterine takes 20 acid damage when she ends her turn in running water.
- ◆ **Stake to the Heart.** Etterine is destroyed if a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into her heart while she is incapacitated in her resting place.
- ◆ **Sunlight Hypersensitivity.** Etterine takes 20 radiant damage when she starts her turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, she has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, Etterine can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by Etterine, incapacitated or restrained. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and Etterine regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

